

# CLASSIC SCENE



September 2011

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**The next 'Classic Scene'  
GOES TO THE PRINTER**

**on the Monday of the week  
preceding the next meeting**

Please send articles by e-mail or typed.

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## Cover picture

*Dunrobin Rally 2011*

## The Chairman's Bit

There were only 7 hardy souls who turned out for last month's "scenic run to Whitebridge", something to do with the atrocious weather we had had all day. Instead we decided to take a run down the "corkscrew" and on to the Dores Inn. Luckily I had left the TVR at home and jumped into Ian's Alfa as I don't think my car had the ground clearance for some of the route! Not many people but a great proper car club evening all the same.



Anyway where was I? Oh yes; well the desk sergeant looked at his pad and said, "the PC who found it said it was here so I'll see if he's on duty today". He managed to get hold of said PC who told him, "no I just left it where it was as I didn't think I would fit in it. The keys are still in it though." WHAT?!! he left the keys in it?, amazing what they teach the Police in college at Hendon. The desk sergeant gave us directions which turned out to be only a couple of streets away. My friend drove us to the road and there was my TVR neatly parked and yes the keys were still in it and yes the passenger door handle was still missing. The garden it was parked outside was being tended by an elderly gentleman who wandered over and said "I wondered whose car that was, it's been here over a fortnight. I was beginning to think it had been dumped as there is no handle on the passenger door!".

Well I jumped in (I was a lot younger and leaner then) and lo and behold the engine started second go and I still had petrol in the tank. I think the car had been stolen just to get someone home, should have asked I'd have given them a lift. Then sitting there it suddenly dawned on me, the keys were still in the car because I had left them in the car! Doh! My friend hadn't twigged either so I have kept that a secret until now. I pulled out of the kerb and began my journey home.

At this point there are 2 things you should know. Due to an exploding piston about six weeks

previously a friend who is a mechanic had rebuilt the bottom half of the engine (1622cc MGA). While it was stripped I had the flywheel lightened and balanced, the crank toughened and reground and added a new high lift Piper cam, bringing it up to about stage 2. So I was still running it in when it was stolen. I had also reported it missing in the TVR CAR Club magazine. As I hit the North Circular Road I thought the only way to find out if it still ok was to give it some serious stick so I then proceeded to drive as fast as I could around the North Circular to Enfield where I lived. The car ran great and I had a big grin on my face by the time I got indoors

This grin was soon wiped off my face as the phone rang. My friend Steve also a TVR owner screamed down the phone, "I've just seen your car. I've been chasing it around the North Circular but the bugger was driving like a maniac! It's ok though I've just rang the police and told them I've spotted it,....."

One new owner to welcome this month, Mark Wilson lives in North Kessock and is the proud owner of a 1956 Bedford "Green Goddess". Look forward to seeing you at future meetings. You'll be easy to spot!

Michael  
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## This Months Meeting

Thursday 1st September. Scenic drive to the Edderton Inn. Meet Storehouse of Foulis car-park for 7:30.

**HIGHLAND CLASSIC MOTOR CLUB**  
**Monthly meetings (1st Thursday of every month)**

**2011**

|               |                                                         |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| February 3rd  | AGM and Quiz Night—North Kessock Hotel                  |
| March 3rd     | Visit to Charles Perrins' Garage and latest Project     |
| April 7th     | Visit to Control Tower at Dalcross Airport              |
| May 5th       | Black Isle Brewery Visit                                |
| June 2nd      | Road run to Fort Augustus                               |
| July 7th      | Drive Each others Cars Night—Brockies Lodge, Kiltarlity |
| August 4th    | Scenic drive to Whitebridge via Foyers                  |
| September 1st | Struie Run to Edderton Inn                              |
| October 6th   | tba                                                     |
| November 3rd  | tba                                                     |
| December 1st  | Christmas Club Night                                    |

**2012**

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| January 5th  | Annual Auction—North Kessock Hotel |
| February 2nd | AGM—North Kessock Hotel            |

*(Further details to be published in 'Classic Scene' prior to the individual meetings)*

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**For Sale**

1977 MG Midget, Tahiti blue and in reasonably good condition for her age. Engine perfect and she goes well.

reduced price for a quick sale as going abroad. £1800

Morag, Drumnadrochit 01456 450 470



Hello,

Last months meeting was meant to be a run to the Whitebridge Hotel, but was curtailed to a visit to the Dores Inn, albeit via the Corkscrew Rd to Inverfarigaig. A good night was had and the beer lived up to its name.

July also saw the Sunbeam Talbot Alpine Rally here in Inverness. There was an impressive display of cars at Simpsons Garden Centre on the Saturday morning before they headed off on their jaunts. The weather held out for them all weekend.

Last months newsletter was a bit short and a bit early as we were 'touring' in the Loire Valley in the Burton. 11 days, 2000 miles and 10,000 2CVs later, we managed to escape with only minor sunburn and no real mechanical difficulties.

I was however, troubled by fuel issues during the journey. Having re-jetted the carburettor the week before, we had driven as far as Lockerbie when I decided to perform a jet-ectomy mid-trip and couldn't help notice quite a bit of water in the carb bowl. This would have been picked up when refueling at the Green Welly in Tyndrum. Undeterred, we managed to continue through England and France and only came to grief when filling up at Sutton Scotney Services on the A34 when Northbound again.

As I was waiting to pay for the fuel, I happened to notice it dripping out of the car somewhat more quickly than I would have liked. A quick assessment on the forecourt, and we set off, trying to burn the fuel faster than it was leaking out. Keeping the tank only half full proved to be the answer to that particular problem from then on (although that meant refuelling every 125 miles!).

When back in Inverness, the fuel tank was dropped and the culprit found. My fairly new



bit of fuel hose from the tank to the main fuel line had perished and allowed some of the 'black gold' to escape. This is the bit of hose that I replaced only 3 years ago. Seems that today's fuel contains enough ethanol to cause even me problems!

This weekend, Miles and I met up to join the Dunrobin Rally in Dornoch. Despite the odd shower earlier on, it was a fine day and there was an impressive display of cars. Good to see some of the club members there enjoying the day.

This Saturday is the Fortrose Fun Day, starting at the Dingwall Auction Mart at 10am as usual. The venue at the Fortrose end of things has changed, so watch out for the signs.

The following weekend sees the Dingwall Feil Maree on the Saturday and the Grantown Motor Mania the following day. Hope to see some of you there.

Next months meeting is a scenic run to the Edderton Inn. Meet at the Storehouse of Foulis at 7:30

### Callum

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## THE GATHERING OF THE CLANS

No, not that kind of Clan, the four wheeled kind. Clan Crusaders to be precise. 2011 being the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diminutive fibreglass coathanger for Hillman Imp parts, celebrations were in order and so we all went off to Washington CD (no that's not a typo we're talking Washington Co Durham). Why Washington? Because in 1971 in a brand new factory on an industrial estate just south of Newcastle that is where two ex (just) Lotus employees set up their new company to manufacture fibreglass monocoque cars to be powered by the magnificently endowed (45bhp) Sunbeam Imp Sport engine. Add Imp suspension and a few other bits and pieces and hey presto a fine handling, nippy and nimble sports coupe weighing about as much as a wet paper bag. A successful competition record, 2<sup>nd</sup> on the '72 Manx International, outright win on the '73 Tour of Mull and still winning to this day.

Early July and three days of events in exceptionally fine weather were attended by over 40 Clans and, as is the way of low volume cars not two were exactly the same. Lengthy conversations verging on nerdiness were on the go at all times. Amongst the 46 cars were one of the pre-

production prototypes along with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cars off the production line (see photo) plus one of the factory supported rally cars.

Some had owned their Clans since new, one had bought his as a non-runner the week before! Clans from as far apart as Aberdeen and Dorset made the trip. There seemed to be a disproportionate number from Scotland for some reason.

Saturday evening's sell out formal dinner was attended by Paul Haussuer, founder of the Clan company who gave a lighthearted and fascinating account of the early days of the cars.

On Sunday morning, creating a not inconsiderable traffic jam we left the Holiday Inn where the week-end was based and made the short journey to the Crowther Industrial Estate to make a ceremonial visit to the old Clan factory. Hundreds of photos were taken of the Clans at the factory which still makes plastic products but unfortunately only rather prosaic Oasis green expanded polystyrene for use by flower arrangers! After the factory we convoyed (is that a real word?) to the North-East Aircraft Museum where the pictures with the



Vulcan bomber were taken. That's my red Clan next to the brown and orange prototype. I was allowed to climb up into the Vulcan flight deck. Surprisingly only the very front part of the aircraft was accessible to the 5 man crew. It was very cramped indeed for such a large aircraft and only the Pilot and Co-pilot had ejector seats!

Various other runs were organised and it was terrific to be able to use the Clan in the company of so many others. A great week-end, well organised and to be remembered for a very long time, or at least until 2021 when hopefully we will be celebrating the Clan's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Notes for information -

A lot of people seem to think that Clans

were kit cars but they were not although a small number were sold in 'Knocked Down' format to try to get round car tax. Sadly the original company only lasted for just over three years as the replacement of purchase tax with VAT made the Clans about the same price as the more mainstream Midgets and Spitfires and profits waned. The same issue also nearly put paid to Lotus's Elan. Around 350 original type Clans were made although they did reappear facelifted in the early 80s made by a company in Northern Ireland and an even smaller number were made after that with the 1500cc Alfased boxer engine. The latter were known as Clan Clovers. The Alfa fans amongst you will know why.

**Dave Charles**



## Local Events Diary

Here are some details of 2011 local motoring events that may be of interest to our members

### August

- 14th Historic Wheelsl Rally, Brodie Castle.  
27th Fortrose Vintage Vehicle Rally

### September

- 3rd Dingwall Street Fair. Contact Charlie Mackay 01349 862093  
4th Motor Mania—Grantown on Spey  
10th Lar Crofterra Pandemonia. Starts from Fairways Inverness  
17th/18th Selkirk Rally  
17th StrathnAirn Working Rally, Daviot  
25th Laigh o' Moray Vintage Association Roseisle Show

### October

- 2nd Alford Autumn Autojumble

*If you notice any errors or omissions, please let the editor know.*



*Cars arriving at the recent Sunbeam Talbot Alpine Rally*

## THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF STAG MAN

I suffer from total anosmia - I have no sense of smell whatever. The relevance of this will become clear shortly.

The Stag had been building up a number of small problems which I hadn't had time to look at. There were numerous suspension and steering joints needed and it was likely that it would fail an MOT. I was busy installing new windows in my house so when it also developed a serious oil leak I realized that I would have to farm out the work to Zak.

I went into the garage one sunny Sunday morning shortly after getting the car back. I noticed the floor was wet beside the OS rear, but because I've got a leaking roof and it had been raining the previous day I didn't think much of it. Later that day I went back into the garage with the intention of taking the Stag out and noticed the floor was well wet, but it was only when Jane came to the garage and exclaimed "what's that awful smell" I realised we had a problem. The floor was covered in petrol. (Total anosmia,

see!)

My immediate thought (unfairly) was "what's Zak done to my car" I thought he might have had to disconnect a fuel line to work on the back end or something like that. However, a quick look showed that the boot floor was wet, so it had to be the tank. It's only a 10 minute job to get the tank out

(fortunately), and sure enough there was a hole in the bottom corner. I had sealed the tank about ten years ago with slosh sealant, so I thought maybe it's time for a new tank.

I checked Paddocks website. £290 + carriage + Vat, oh and I need a Mk2 filler pipe at £35 + Vat. The better part of 400 smackeros!!!.

Ummm.. maybe

slosh sealant at fifteen quid? I phoned FROST, and asked if POR sealant would adhere to the old coating? Unlikely says the chap. He said that POR stripper would remove the old coating, but it sounded a bit iffy to me,



pouring it in and hoping for the best. Nonetheless I ordered the stripper and sealant which came to sixty quid.

I emailed Zak to tell him my woes and he came back with “Have you heard of JB Weld?” No, but I googled it. There are two products. JB Weld is two tubes like Araldite, and JB Stik, which is the one for fuel tanks. It is a bit like a stick of soft rock with one product wrapped around the other. You cut off a lump and mix it in the palm of your hand. But where to purchase said product?

Again I googled suppliers with no success, then I tried e-bay, and there it was for £7.95 +P&P (Every bloody

thing’s on ebay). I cut a 30mm circle of thin steel, and domed it to shape to match the corner of the tank. Then basically stuck it on like a patch using the JB Stik. An hour later, and it holds petrol. Amazing! Now tell me what would you go for. Four hundred quid for a new tank, or a tenner for some JB Stik?

How come I've been messing with cars for forty years and have'nt heard of JB Stik? (oh, and FROST took the other stuff back, minus carriage)

B.M.



## Letters....

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a member of the Automobile club of North Wales. I am currently trying to trace the history of a MK2 Jaguar I currently own. Colour opalescent blue Reg 288 AVA

From what information I have the car I believe has a Lanarkshire registration No? But spent 49 of its 50 years life, firstly in Nairn 1961 from 2006 [First Owner Mr Alexander Bowman] Then from 2006 to 2010 in Elgin [2nd owner Mr John Albiston.]

It has a certificate from the Alness business association and Highland classic motor club Class D second in class 2004

I have attached a picture of it, it shows it with Wire wheels, but up till 2006 these wheels were standard steel wheels [I still have these wheels as they came with the car.]

From what Information I have the car has still only covered 40000 miles. It always gets a lot of admirers at shows and is a regular class winner with the club. I hope to put together a history of the car if possible and thus my request for help.

Any help from your members in filling in its missing history would be greatly appreciated.

Kindest Regards

Joseph Gibson 01495 236808

Joseph.Gibson@unilever.com



## MILES'S MEANDERINGS

So, the Classic Car Show season is well and truly upon us, even if the weather hasn't noticed yet and decided to cheer up any. We should be used to it by now, but it still never fails to amaze me sometimes how dismal it can be up here during the so called summer, those of you running soft tops (especially when you put them down) must be masochists of the highest order.

Anyway a couple of good Rally's have come and gone already. I managed a run to Tain "sans famille" (I think that they were rather glad after the drenching I got and that was with a roof!).

A last minute run to Brodie "avec Wife" proved to be an enjoyable way to kill a couple of hours in a field; at least I think that is what she meant

when I heard her mumbling something about two hours/old cars/killing/and in a field!

And most recently I managed a good blast up the A9 to Golspie along side a (small) number of fellow HCMC members (it's not that far) and joined in with the Dunrobin Vintage Car Show.

The weather mostly stayed dry, even if my driver's seat didn't during the short monsoon shower that came on whilst we were stopped in Dornoch, due to a non-functioning electric window that I had foolishly lowered at one point, and, after a nice lunch in the castle tea rooms, a pleasant afternoon was spent nattering to fellow car enthusiasts (thanks Callum, for rescuing me from the Reliant nut that collared me as I arrived - ten



minutes sooner would have done no harm either!).

My only gripe with this show would be that the Classic Car category covers from 1961 onwards (but must be over 25 years old) which pitches a pretty varied set of vehicles against each other (must be a nightmare to judge) and then leaves anything newer in the "Other exhibits" class meaning that, had I gone through with entering my Raleigh Chopper, it would not only have been judged against an Austin J40 pedal car but also Callum's Burton and a brand new three wheeler. Go figure!

I would still recommend putting it on your 2012 calendar though (the list of category winners is getting a little bit "samey" so why not pop up there and given them a challenge next year).

One thing that I have noticed this year is that, apart from on rally days, there seems to be a distinct lack of classics on our roads, home grown or otherwise. The last lot I remember seeing were the Ecurie Ecosse crowd that were up earlier in the year.

Not quite your average classics but very nice to come across in the Kingsmill's car park on your way home



***Pre-war TPV (Tout Petit Voiture) prototypes at Salbris***

from taxiing the kids to yet another week night evening activity (you have to earn brownie points some how for getting all these weekend days off to sit in a damp field with all the other nutters and their rust!).

What did amuse me was when the Ecurie Ecosse support mechanic apologised to us that the D-Type had just been put away in the trailer for security reasons but we could still see the AC Cobra over by the wall that some chap had just paid one point five million pounds for (Christ how much is a D-Type worth?)...

...then he went off to find the vintage Bentley that the driver had just shunted another car with at the petrol station around the corner!

The following morning, though, I was pleasantly surprised to see that the Ferrari GTO that pulled out into traffic in front of me from the hotel car park and that I subsequently followed up the A9 for a way belched more fumes and liquids from it's rear end than any classic owned by a HCMC member that I have seen recently.

All this talk of exotica is all very well but I have to say that I was very pleased while at Brodie with the number of positive comments from Joe Public about "when was the last time you saw one of those..." etc.

regarding my Scimitar and some of the other more unique offerings on the field such as the beige Mk1 Cavalier and the odd Cortina parked up.

Would you not be kind of gutted if you'd turned up in your expensive motor, having polished it to within an inch of its life and the steward casually directs you to park next to a dozen other identical cars? (You might as well have bought a Triumph!)

I mean... aren't these E-Types getting a just little bit common now that they've all come out of the woodwork to celebrate 50 years of production... well, most of them anyway!

Now, the funniest thing that I have seen this year was at Tain and it involved one Gazebo and almost a dozen HCMC members. What a palaver!

Willy, who very kindly brought the contraption along, kept informing us that at home it only took four people to erect it. Well, could I respectfully request that next time he generously lets us use it that he also brings with him the other three people, because we were bloody useless!

The whole episode actually put paid to a little dream I had, though, that as a club, and with all the expertise we possess within that club, it might

one day be possible to carry out one of those “DIY SOS” style rescues of a fellow club member’s stalled restoration project, where we would turn up on mass and with everyone using their own particular skills and donating their time and maybe even parts we would burn the midnight oil one weekend and on Monday morning stand back and admire the fruits of our labour as another worthy classic retakes its rightful place on the highways and bye-ways of this fair land!

However, having seen you lot in action I’m not so sure that it would be such a good idea. We are likely to end up with something wearing the door handles from an Allegro, the wing mirrors of a Capri, the engine would have been found lying in a corner and the wiring loom would be taped together so haphazardly, that one of the electric window switches would have to be mounted up side down to

operate correctly and when you braked, while indicating, the back end would light up and flash like a Christmas tree on speed.

You would have to turn the radio up to drown out the knocking from the exhaust on acceleration and woe betide if you had to brake at speed and didn’t have plenty of space on the left to accommodate the violent pull towards the curb on depressing the home-made pedal!

It is also likely to have been painted some god-awful beige/brown colour from the 70’s!

Hang on, isn’t that my……..!

## MILES



# Out & About



*Simca Aronde P60*



*Naylor 1700 TF*

*If you're interested in further details of these vehicles, contact the editor for more info*